Amendments to the Claims

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the present application.

Listing of Claims

1.   (Currently Amended)   A method for monitoring ~~the~~ performance of a character recognition system, the method comprising ~~the step of~~:

(a)   utilizing an average confidence score generated for a plurality of characters ~~for~~ to provide ongoing performance monitoring of the character recognition system, wherein

a confidence score indicates a level of confidence that a character is accurately recognized, and

utilizing the average confidence score further comprises:

determining a threshold confidence score, wherein the threshold confidence score represents a value greater than a minimum level of acceptable performance for the character recognition system and less than an expected level of performance for a new character recognition system,

comparing the average confidence score to the threshold confidence score, and

indicating to an operator that the character recognition system is in need of service responsive to the average confidence score falling below the threshold confidence score.

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, <u>wherein the plurality of characters is recorded on at least one end user document, and the method</u> further ~~comprising the step of~~ <u>comprises</u>:

~~(b)~~ generating the average confidence score ~~from~~ <u>for</u> the plurality of characters ~~recorded on at least one end user document~~ prior to ~~the~~ utilizing ~~step (a)~~ <u>the average confidence score</u>.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 2, wherein generating ~~step (b)~~ <u>the average confidence score</u> further comprises<u>:</u>

~~(b1)~~ reading [[a]] <u>one or more</u> character<u>s</u> recorded on an end user document;

~~(b2)~~ calculating ~~the~~ <u>a</u> confidence score for <u>each of</u> the <u>one or more</u> character<u>s;</u> <u>and</u>

~~(b3) repeating steps (b1) and (b2) for each of a plurality of characters recorded on the end user document; and~~

~~(b4)~~ averaging the confidence scores for the <u>one or more</u> characters with confidence scores ~~of~~ <u>for</u> all characters <u>previously</u> read over a last set number of end user documents.

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Cancelled)

7.   (Currently Amended)   The method of claim ~~6~~ 1, wherein responsive to the average confidence score falling below the threshold confidence score, the method further ~~comprising the steps of~~ comprises:

   ~~(c)~~ servicing the character recognition system; and

   ~~(d)~~ resetting the average confidence score ~~calculation~~.

8.   (Original)   The method of claim 2, wherein the at least one end user document is a standardized document.

9.   (Original)   The method of claim 8, wherein the standardized document is a bank note or personal check.

10.   (Currently Amended)   The method of claim ~~9~~ 1, wherein at least one of the plurality of characters is a magnetic ink character recognition (MICR) character.

11.   (Original)   The method of claim 1, wherein the character recognition system is one of a magnetic ink character recognition system, an optical character recognition system, or a combined magnetic ink and optical character recognition system.

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12. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium ~~containing programming instructions~~ encoded with a computer program for monitoring ~~the~~ performance of a character recognition system, the computer program comprising ~~the~~ computer-executable instructions for:

~~(a)~~ utilizing an average confidence score generated for a plurality of characters ~~for~~ to provide ongoing performance monitoring of the character recognition system, wherein

a confidence score indicates a level of confidence that a character is accurately recognized, and

utilizing the average confidence score further comprises:

determining a threshold confidence score, wherein the threshold confidence score represents a value greater than a minimum level of acceptable performance for the character recognition system and less than an expected level of performance for a new character recognition system,

comparing the average confidence score to the threshold confidence score, and

indicating to an operator that the character recognition system is in need of service responsive to the average confidence score falling below the threshold confidence score.

13. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium of claim 12, wherein the plurality of characters is recorded on at least one end user document, and the computer program further ~~comprising the~~ comprises computer-executable instructions for:

~~(b)~~ generating the average confidence score ~~from~~ for the plurality of characters ~~recorded on at least one end user document~~ prior to ~~the~~ utilizing ~~instruction (a)~~ the average confidence score.

14. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium of claim 13, wherein generating ~~instruction (b)~~ the average confidence score further comprises ~~instructions for~~:

(~~b1~~) reading [[a]] one or more character<u>s</u> recorded on an end user document;

(~~b2~~) calculating ~~the~~ <u>a</u> confidence score for <u>each of</u> the <u>one or more</u> character<u>s</u>; <u>and</u>

(~~b3~~) ~~repeating steps (b1) and (b2) for each of a plurality of characters recorded on the end user document; and~~

(~~b4~~) averaging the confidence scores for the <u>one or more</u> characters with confidence scores ~~of~~ <u>for</u> all characters <u>previously</u> read over a last set number of end user documents.

15. (Cancelled)

16. (Cancelled)

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium of claim ~~17~~ <u>12</u>, <u>wherein responsive to the average confidence score falling below the threshold confidence score, the computer program</u> further ~~comprising~~ <u>comprises computer-executable</u> instructions for:

(~~c~~) servicing the character recognition system; and

(~~d~~) resetting the average confidence score ~~calculation~~.

19.   (Currently Amended)   A system for monitoring ~~the~~ performance of a character recognition system, <u>the system</u> comprising:

~~means for reading a plurality of characters recorded on at least one end user document; and~~

a performance monitoring module ~~for generating an average confidence score for the plurality of characters~~ <u>that utilizes an average confidence score generated for a plurality of characters to provide ongoing performance monitoring of the character recognition system,</u> wherein

a confidence score indicates a level of confidence that a character is accurately recognized, and ~~for utilizing the average confidence score for ongoing performance monitoring of the character recognition system~~

<u>the performance monitoring module utilizes the average confidence score by</u>

<u>determining a threshold confidence score, wherein the threshold confidence score represents a value greater than a minimum level of acceptable performance for the character recognition system and less than an expected level of performance for a new character recognition system,</u>

<u>comparing the average confidence score to the threshold confidence score, and</u>

<u>indicating to an operator that the character recognition system is in need of service responsive to the average confidence score falling below the threshold confidence score.</u>

20. (Currently Amended) The system of claim ~~17~~ 36, wherein the means for reading the ~~plurality of~~ <u>one or more</u> characters comprises one of an optical scanner, a magnetic read head, or a combined optical scanner and magnetic read head.

21. (Cancelled)

22. (Cancelled)

23. (Cancelled)

24. (Cancelled)

25. (Currently Amended) A method for monitoring ~~the~~ performance of a character recognition system, <u>the method</u> comprising ~~the step of~~:

~~(a)~~ utilizing a median confidence score <u>generated</u> for a plurality of characters ~~for~~ <u>to provide</u> ongoing performance monitoring of the character recognition system, wherein

a confidence score indicates a level of confidence that a character is accurately recognized<u>, and</u>

<u>utilizing the median confidence score further comprises:</u>

<u>determining a threshold confidence score, wherein the threshold confidence score represents a value greater than a minimum level of acceptable performance for the character recognition system and less than an expected level of performance for a new character recognition system,</u>

comparing the median confidence score to the threshold confidence score, and

indicating to an operator that the character recognition system is in need of

service responsive to the median confidence score falling below the threshold confidence

score.

26.   (Currently Amended)   The method of claim 25, wherein the plurality of characters is

recorded on at least one end user document, and the method further ~~comprising the step of~~

comprises:

(b)   generating the median confidence score ~~from~~ for the plurality of characters

~~recorded on at least one end user document~~ prior to ~~the~~ utilizing ~~step (a)~~ the median confidence

score.

27.   (Currently Amended)   The method of claim 26, wherein generating ~~step (b)~~ the median

confidence score further comprises:

(b1)   reading [[a]] one or more character[s] recorded on an end user document;

(b2)   calculating ~~the~~ a confidence score for each of the one or more characters; and

(b3)   ~~repeating steps (b1) and (b2) for each of a plurality of characters recorded on the~~

~~end user document; and~~

(b4)   determining the median confidence score from the confidence score[s] ~~of~~ for the

one or more characters and confidence scores ~~of~~ for all characters previously read over a last set

number of end user documents.

28.   (Cancelled)

29.   (Cancelled)

30.   (Cancelled)

31.   (New) The computer readable medium of claim 13, wherein the at least one end user document is a standardized document.

32.   (New) The computer readable medium of claim 31, wherein the standardized document is a bank note or personal check.

33.   (New) The computer readable medium of claim 12, wherein at least one of the plurality of characters is a magnetic ink character recognition (MICR) character.

34.   (New) The computer readable medium of claim 12, wherein the character recognition system is one of a magnetic ink character recognition system, an optical character recognition system, or a combined magnetic ink and optical character recognition system.

35.   (New) The system of claim 19, wherein the plurality of characters is recorded on at least one end user document, and the performance monitoring module further generates the average confidence score for the plurality of characters prior to utilizing the average confidence score.

36.   (New) The system of claim 35, further comprising:

        means for reading one or more characters recorded on an end user document; and

a decode module that calculates a confidence score for each of the one or more characters,

wherein the performance monitoring module generates the average confidence score by averaging the confidence scores for the one or more characters with confidence scores for all characters previously read over a last set number of end user documents.

37.   (New)   The system of claim 35, wherein the at least one end user document is a standardized document.

38.   (New)   The system of claim 37, wherein the standardized document is a bank note or personal check.

39.   (New)   The system of claim 19, wherein at least one of the plurality of characters is a magnetic ink character recognition (MICR) character.

40.   (New)   The method of claim 25, wherein responsive to the median confidence score falling below the threshold confidence score, the method further comprises:

servicing the character recognition system; and

resetting the median confidence score.

41.   (New)   The method of claim 26, wherein the at least one end user document is a bank note or personal check.

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42.   (New)   The method of claim 25, wherein at least one of the plurality of characters is a magnetic ink character recognition (MICR) character.

43.   (New)   The method of claim 25, wherein the character recognition system is one of a magnetic ink character recognition system, an optical character recognition system, or a combined magnetic ink and optical character recognition system.